

Tolsona Mud Volcanoes

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior



Maps: Available at Tolsona Wilderness Campground

Distance: Approximately 2 miles round trip from Tolsona Campground to the mud volcanoes.

Time: 1– 1½ hours Round trip

Access: The trail is accessible from **Tolsona Wilderness Campground**. The campground is located at mile 173 of the Glenn Highway (27 miles from the park visitor center near Copper Center). Because the trail is on private property, hikers who are not registered campers are asked to pay a small fee of \$5. This charge includes the use of a nice picnic site.

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate.

Highlights:

Beautiful forest hike, wide variety of animal tracks, mud volcanoes



Note: Please exercise caution around the mud volcanoes. Some of these pits can be more than 4 feet deep.



Tolsona Mud Volcanoes

Wrangell-St.Elias National Park and Preserve

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior



Route:

The trail begins at Tolsona Wilderness Campground directly across from Campsite F. The trail then winds up a hillside and through the forest. About a half mile into the hike the trail crosses a boggy area. In this part of the hike the trail becomes somewhat unclear. To continue you must pick your way across the bog until you reach the forested area. When you get there the trail once again becomes apparent and continues on to the mud volcanoes.

Overview:

Around the perimeter of the mud volcanoes you can see numerous dead trees. The presence of these dead trees was the result of an increase in activity following the Good Friday Earthquake of 1964. There is a dead vegetation zone around the mud volcanoes due to the salty content of the mud. These cold, salty springs flow almost year-round and during the frozen winters the site is frequented by animals who are in search of moisture. The gas that you will see bubbling is 55% methane and originates in coal beds that formed in the Lower Cretaceous and Upper Jurassic periods. As these bubbles make their way up through the earth to the surface, they pick up fine silt. This silt is then deposited when the air bubbles pop, and over time enough silt is deposited to form the mud flats as they appear today.

